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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/628,220	07/28/2003	Russell E. Blette	58802US002	5457
32692	7590	07/13/2004	EXAMINER	
3M INNOVATIVE PROPERTIES COMPANY PO BOX 33427 ST. PAUL, MN 55133-3427				LOFDAHL, JORDAN M
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3644				

DATE MAILED: 07/13/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/628,220	BLETTE ET AL. <i>92</i>
	Examiner	Art Unit
	Jordan Lofdahl	3644

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM  
THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 May 2004.  
 2a) This action is FINAL.      2b) This action is non-final.  
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1-24 is/are pending in the application.  
 4a) Of the above claim(s) 12, 13, 16 and 17 is/are withdrawn from consideration.  
 5) Claim(s) 24 is/are allowed.  
 6) Claim(s) 1, 2, 4-11 and 18 is/are rejected.  
 7) Claim(s) 3, 15 and 19-22 is/are objected to.  
 8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.  
 10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).  
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).  
 a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:  
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.  
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.  
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/17/03</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Election/Restrictions***

Claims 16 and 17 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on 5/21/04.

Claims 12 and 13 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Applicant timely traversed the restriction (election) requirement in the reply filed on 5/21/04

Applicant's election with traverse of the election of species in the reply filed on 5/21/04 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the species are in the same class. This is not found persuasive because although the search for the species may be in the same class, the search for the different species are deemed to be a burden to the examiner.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

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***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1, 2, 4-11 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cote (4125958) and further in view of Schuring et al. (5143500).

As to claim 1, Cote discloses a device comprising a female connector (1) having first and second opposite ends and a longitudinal axis and symmetric about the axis; the first end capable of being connected to a fishing line and the interior having an interior feature (fig. 4); a male connector (11) having first and second opposite ends and a longitudinal axis and symmetric about the axis; the second end capable of being connected to a second fishing line. Not disclosed is a radial extent in the female connector and a projection on the male connector. Schuring et al., however, discloses a radial extent in the female connector and a projection on the male connector (fig. 1). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to comprise the device of Cote with the radial extent and projection of Schuring et al. to create a more secure engagement means.

As to claim 2, disclosed is a device, as modified, wherein the female connector is capable of being removably connected to the first fishing line.

As to claim 4, disclosed is the projection having a first end at the first end of the male connector and an opposite second end wherein the projection tapers from a smallest diameter at the first end to a larger diameter at the second end ('500; fig. 1).

As to claim 5, disclosed is a neck and a radial shoulder ('500; fig. 1).

As to claim 6, disclosed is a raised interior annulus ('500; fig. 1).

As to claim 7, disclosed is a tapered surface.

As to claim 8, disclosed is a flat surface.

As to claim 9, disclosed is a stop member.

As to claim 10, disclosed is the male connector tapering from the larger diameter adjacent the stop member to a smaller diameter at the second end of the male connector.

As to claim 11, disclosed is the male connector capable of being permanently connected to the second fishing line.

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As to claim 14, disclosed is a line capable of having a float.

As to claim 18, the method steps of the instant claim are readily apparent during the operation of the device, as modified, of Cote.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

Claim 24 is allowed.

Claims 3, 15 and 19-22 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jordan Lofdahl whose telephone number is 703.605.1217. The examiner can normally be reached on m-f 9-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Carone can be reached on 703.306.4198. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

jml

*MICHAEL C. JONES*  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER